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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 000421

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TAGS: [APEC](#) [ECON](#) [IO](#) [PREL](#) [TW](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: TAIWANESE ASK FOR HELP WITH DISCRIMINATION IN APEC
AND WHO

Classified By: DCM John Boardman for Reasons 1.4 b/d

11. (C) Summary: In a February 22 meeting, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Hanoi (TECOH) representatives expressed concern over inequitable treatment they claim they are experiencing in both the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), a result, they say, of pressure from China on other economies, specifically Vietnam. TECOH Chief Representative Huang Nan-Huei cited problems with the Government of Vietnam's (GVN) hotel room allocations for the November 2006 APEC Leaders Meeting and general coordination and communication problems in the WHO. Huang stressed the importance of maintaining goodwill in Taiwan's expanding relationship with Vietnam, where 30,000 Taiwanese reside and more than 20,000 tourists visited in 2005. An even greater number of Vietnamese) almost 180,000 - live or work in Taiwan. Taiwan would, however, like more support from Vietnam in these organizations, especially since Vietnam has such a critical role in hosting APEC 2006. A Vietnamese contact of the Taiwanese Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) in Washington D.C. suggested the most effective means of increasing GVN support of Taiwan would be to ask the United States to encourage the Vietnamese and all APEC and WHO members to treat each other equitably. End Summary.

APEC

12. (C) TECOH Chief Representative Huang began his February 22 meeting with DCM John Boardman by noting that Taiwan was a full member of APEC and entitled to equal treatment with other APEC economies. He noted, however, that despite his request for 90 hotel rooms for the November 2006 APEC Leaders Meeting, Huang received only 20 rooms in a January 25 APEC planning meeting led by the GVN. (Note: As in Korea, the host government controls the hotel room allocation process for the Leaders Meeting, though they have not been involved in making reservations for other APEC events. End note.) Indonesia and the Philippines, who will share the same hotel with Taiwan, each received 80 rooms, a far more reasonable number for their typical delegation size, said Huang. He recently wrote the GVN's National Committee for APEC requesting that Taiwan receive 60-70 additional rooms, but he has not received any response. A Vietnamese contact in Washington D.C. reportedly told TECRO that Taiwan's problem with hotel allocations was a result of strong Chinese pressure on the GVN to limit Taiwan's participation in APEC. The Vietnamese source suggested that high profile U.S. support of Taiwan would give the GVN the political cover it needs to be more accommodating.

13. (C) Huang also expressed hope that APEC meetings of

particular importance to Taiwan, specifically the Ministers, meeting on Women,s Issues, receive support from the United States. This meeting was last held in 2002 in Mexico, and Taiwan would like to see it put on the 2006 agenda. Huang encouraged the United States to support a proposal to schedule this event.

¶4. (C) DCM Boardman asked Huang if Taiwan had raised these APEC concerns with the GVN or with other economies. Huang replied that since Taiwan did not want to embarrass the Vietnamese nor have their 20 rooms publicly confirmed, Huang did not question the hotel assignments in the January 25th meeting but later wrote a letter seeking clarification from the GVN,s National Committee for APEC. Huang said Taiwan would like more GVN support in APEC, but also wants to protect its flourishing relationship with Vietnam, where 30,000 Taiwanese live and work and more than 20,000 Taiwanese tourists vacation each year. With 180,000 Vietnamese resident in Taiwan, 69 flights per week between the two economies and an increasing number of trade opportunities, the Taiwanese do not want to offend their Vietnamese hosts.

¶5. (C) DCM Boardman asked Huang several times if Taiwan had experienced any other specific incidents of discrimination in APEC, but Huang repeatedly stated he had no other examples to offer. Taiwan is worried, however, that there will be some similar problems in the future, and would like the United States to raise at whatever level we deem appropriate the importance of respecting the equality of all APEC members at the upcoming Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) informal meeting on March 1 or at the plenary on March 2.

WHO

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¶6. (C) Huang asserted that Taiwan tries hard to participate in WHO meetings both in Hanoi and elsewhere, but Chinese efforts to limit their involvement make it difficult. Taiwan has asked the GVN for more support in WHO, but the GVN repeatedly claims they cannot offer any support because of pressure from the Chinese. Huang added that Taiwan has tried to help the GVN on health matters, noting that Taiwan gave the GVN more than 600,000 doses of Tamiflu at the height of the avian influenza problem last year. They would like the GVN, in turn, to be supportive of them in health-related events.

¶7. (C) Comment: The GVN,s willingness to bow to Chinese pressure seems, at present, to be a greater problem for U.S. APEC proposals on security issues than on actual Taiwanese participation in APEC events. A GVN contact in Hanoi recently told Econoff that the Chinese government had demarched the GVN in early February on Taiwan,s APEC involvement. Over the past three weeks, when Embassy Hanoi passed on questions from EAP/EP regarding the status of several U.S. APEC security proposals, GVN officials repeatedly said that they could not support the proposals until the question of Taiwan,s participation in them had been resolved. The Taiwanese, however, seem to have experienced few actual instances of discrimination that would merit an intervention with the GVN. The USG,s own need for more than 900 hotel rooms at the November 2006 Leaders Meeting, of which only 400 have been officially allocated to us, makes it difficult for us to comment on Taiwan,s need for an additional 60-70 rooms. Their request that the United States make a public comment at the SOM regarding the equality of all APEC economies, however, would be easier to accommodate. Such a statement of support would reinforce the view with which we want other APEC economies to regard our own APEC proposals, and help communicate Taiwan,s message to both China and Vietnam. End Comment.

MARINE